



SENATE  
MAJORITY LEADER  
**KEN SIKKEMA**

## NEWS RELEASE

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# **Sikkema Urges Governor to Sign Post-Labor Day School Legislation**

*Senate Majority Leader says it's good for the state, its families and its schools*

**Lansing** - Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema today urged Gov. Granholm to sign legislation requiring schools to start classes after Labor Day. The bill was presented late this morning.

"The governor has been lamenting she can't improve Michigan's economy. Here's a real opportunity to do so and I don't understand her hesitation," said Sikkema, R-Wyoming. "This bill will have a dramatic positive impact on tourism in this state, will help schools with funding and expenses, and is supported by a majority of Michigan's families."

Experts have predicted that starting schools in early September instead of late August will have at least a \$100 million positive impact on Michigan's tourism industry. One of the state's three major industries, tourism has been hard hit lately due to rising gas prices and an unacceptably high unemployment rate in Michigan.

"Extending the summer tourism season will help protect small businesses and the jobs they provide," Sikkema said. "There's no reason for the governor to be sending mixed messages on this."

An increase in tourism spending will mean a boost for school funding as well, since a major source of money for public schools is the state's sales tax. Schools can adjust the remaining school days by a few minutes to make up the lost days. This will help them save money on expenses because they won't have to open buildings or fire-up school buses and kitchens for as many days each year.

"This bill is good for Michigan's economy, businesses, families, schools - what's not to like?" Sikkema said. "The governor went on a publicity trip this summer promoting tourism and encouraging people to 'Say yes to Michigan.' Now she needs to heed her own advice and say yes to this legislation."

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